



INFO

A Quarterly Newsletter

Spring 2007

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CAPE Upcoming Event:

Remember not to miss the Meet and Greet on June 7, 2007 between 5.30 p.m. and 7.30 p.m. at North York Civic Centre, Council chambers RSVP by June 1, 2007 at info@capeinfo.ca

Greeting

There has been lots of movement behind the scenes at the CAPE offices on 36 Toronto Street. Being situated in the downtown core, CAPE staff and board members work industriously, trailblazing rather quietly!

From its inception as a informal group to a project to an organization, CAPE Council for Access to the Profession of Engineering has grown exponentially in terms of staff (from 1 to 3 fulltime!) and more importantly, in terms of the respect that it carries amongst its different stakeholders. Credit goes to the CAPE Board that has worked tirelessly to guide the staff and created one of the most credible immigrant-professional membership based organizations in Canada.

Serving Immigrants with Engineering Backgrounds (IEBs)

As the collective voice of immigrants with engineering backgrounds (IEBs) CAPE redefined its vision and mission statements during its restructuring period that began in 2006.

The **CAPE vision** is to "Improve the quality of our lives by participating in the practice of engineering in Ontario and Canada reaching our maximum potential to contribute to our communities, Provinces, Canada and the world."

The **CAPE mission** is to achieve its vision by "Maximizing utilization of our engineering education, skills and potential and by upgrading our knowledge and skills in keeping with evolving trends in engineering and sustainable human development."

CAPE arrived at these vision and mission statements after much soul searching and hard research which showed that:

1. 60% of immigrant professionals that landed in Canada between 1997 - 2001 self-identified as engineers and a further 15% identified as technicians and technologists - totaling 75% of all immigrant professionals landing in that period.
2. Immigrants with engineering backgrounds are nearly six times as likely to have a Masters degree and nearly twice as likely to hold a PhD degree as the average Ontarian - yet over 80% of us are not able to work as engineers in Ontario.

CAPE identified the different barriers to enter the labor market for IEBs (*See in this issue, article: Beyond Access to Engineering our Own Future*) and reorganized itself to better serve their needs as well as to provide advisory and technical support to the different organizations serving IEBs so that IEBs can indeed **engineer their own futures**.

Membership News

Since it's incorporation into a non-profit, CAPE has been undergoing organizational restructuring. The new focus of the organization is on effective labor market participation of its members (IEBs) that make Ontario and Canada, their home.

In order for you to get to know us better, CAPE would like to invite you to an **Open House Meet and Greet** at the North York Civic Centre (Council Chambers) on June 7, 2007 from 5:00 -8:00 PM.

Our staff would love to meet with you and we hope that interacting with several CAPE partners from within the voluntary, private and public sectors will be of benefit to you. In addition to interesting presentations and speeches, there will lots of munchies and information packages to take away! In particular, CAPE will be announcing a whole host of new member benefits including:

New Member Benefits:

- Redesigned CAPE website (www.capeinfo.ca) full of pertinent and useful information for its members, community partners and policy makers.
- Innovative Career Decision Support Tools to help its members make informed career decisions and define their career paths! These ground-breaking tools (<http://www.capeinfo.ca/employment.php>) are being pilot tested by CAPE members and service organizations across Ontario.

- Huge cost savings on insurance products for CAPE members. Purchase your insurances from [Rai Grant Insurance Brokers](#) and receive great rates!

Employment News

CAPE has started to build capacity to ensure that immigrants with engineering backgrounds can make **informed choices about their career paths** in Canada by providing technical expertise and advisory support to service agencies including:

- Conducting **70 workshops** with agencies serving immigrants with engineering backgrounds under the "**Engineering Your Future Program**" initiated by [Skills for Change](#) (SfC) in Toronto
- Providing **career decision support tools** for the "**Engineering Bridges Program**" initiated by [Settlement and Integration Services Organization \(SISO\) in Hamilton](#).

Both these programs are funded by the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration (MCI), Province of Ontario.

Community News

CAPE is leading the implementation of its multi-stakeholder strategy for the employment of immigrants with engineering backgrounds (IEBs) known as "[From Canadian First to Canada First](#)" which was launched a year ago in May 2006.

[The first multi-stakeholder roundtable](#) held under this strategy was sponsored by SkillRoute Canada Inc. on March 20, 2007 and attended by representatives of the voluntary, private and public sectors.

Knowledge Mobilization

"Graduates, at the rate of four to one, are opting not to become licensed as professional engineers. If four out of five grads from medical schools were disappearing into the professional ether, you can imagine how seriously that would be taken." (Patrick J. Quinn, Professional Engineers Ontario (PEO), The Big Picture - President's Message, Engineering Dimensions Magazine May /June 2006.

It seems that Professional Engineers Ontario (PEO) - the regulator for the engineering profession in Ontario - is taking this issue seriously and even waiving the application fee for the P.Eng License in order to attract new applicants for licensing. The flip side to this is that 80% percent of the jobs in engineering obviously do not require licensing, but which and where are these jobs?

CAPE is undertaking the "**Skills Commensurate Engineering Access**" project funded by the Ministry of Training Colleges and Universities (MTCU) that will shed light and increase our knowledge of the nature of engineering occupations that do not require licensing.

Knowledge Article

Beyond Access to Engineering our Future in Canada: The Evolution of CAPE

The Beginning: 1993 - 2003

Anecdotal evidence began to emerge in early 1990s that immigrants with engineering backgrounds (IEBs)(1) were not being able to access their professions in Ontario. The Coalition for Access to Professional Engineering (CAPE) established in response to this in 1993 focused on improving the transparency of the licensing process during this period.

From 1998 to 2002, Canadian universities introduced 42,000 engineering graduates into the workforce (2). In this same period, 62,650 foreign trained engineers immigrated to Canada.1 The largest number were Electrical and Electronic Engineers and Mechanical Engineers, 27% and 24% respectively, followed by Civil Engineers at 17%. The annual supply of immigrants with engineering backgrounds in 2000 exceeded the domestic supply. The Landed Immigrant Data System indicates that between 1997 and 2001, 64,918 immigrants coming to Ontario identified themselves as members of a regulated profession. Of this total, 39,145 (60 per cent) self-identified as engineers; a further 9,627 identified themselves as engineering technicians and technologists.

Engineering Access: 2003 - 2006

In 2003, CAPE moved beyond licensing and regulation to tackling issues of access to the profession of engineering through the 'Engineering Access' project, a community action research project that comprised of:

1. Documenting barriers to engineering employment; creating leadership and building the capacity of immigrants with engineering backgrounds (IEBs) to develop a collective voice for themselves; and creating multi-stakeholder and employer engagement. This part of the project was funded by Canadian Heritage.
2. A comprehensive survey of skills and experience of immigrants with engineering backgrounds (IEBs); relevant labor market research; and an inventory of engineering employers in Ontario. This part of the project was funded by Human Resources and Skills Development (HRSD).
3. Transformation of CAPE into an interactive web-based membership and community coalition of, and resourced by, immigrants with engineering backgrounds (IEBs).

The Engineering Access project brought to the fore the following startling facts:

- Immigrants with engineering backgrounds (IEBs) are nearly six times as likely to have a Masters degree and nearly twice as likely to hold a PhD degree as the average Ontarian
- Over 80% of are unable to work as engineers in Ontario
- Major barriers identified include the lack of "social capital" i.e. networks that are central to getting employment in Canada. This social capital advantage fuels what CAPE has identified as the 'Canadian First' thinking. This kind of thinking locks out IEBs from their professions through:
 1. Biased recruitment processes
 2. Reserved titles
 3. Inadequate credentialing
 4. Requirements for Canadian experience
 5. Poor settlement services etc.

Restructuring CAPE: 2006 - Present

IEBs move to Canada to enhance their lives through the utilization of their hard earned engineering education, experience and skills. This realization has pushed CAPE to restructure itself as an organization of IEBs that wanted now to take control of their destinies. CAPE members wanted to enhance both their own economic integration as well as Canada's transition to the knowledge economy.

Thus the new CAPE vision is to: "Improve the quality of our lives by participating in the practice of engineering in Ontario and Canada reaching our maximum potential to contribute to our communities, Provinces, Canada and the world."

The new CAPE mission is: "We will do this by maximizing utilization of our engineering education, skills and potential and by upgrading our knowledge and skills in keeping with evolving trends in engineering and sustainable human development."

Ultimately, CAPE has chosen to evolve and become the change it wants to see, or as they say in Canadian parlance, "to walk the talk".

(1) Previously the term Foreign Trained Engineers was being used. In 2006, CAPE changed the term to Immigrants with Engineering Backgrounds (IEBs) to create a more inclusive term that could be applied to all professionals that identified within the engineering /applied sciences including technicians and technologists, as well as eliminating the loaded term "foreign".

(2) CCPE (2004), Canadian Engineers for Tomorrow, Trends in Engineering Enrolment and Degrees Awarded 1998 to 2002.

Join Us!

If you wish to become a part of this vision please visit our website www.capeinfo.ca and join our growing membership.

Contact Us

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